

Gorbachev denies socialism in crisis

PARIS (R) — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev confronted with mounting problems at home, denied Wednesday during a state visit to France that world socialism was in crisis. "To say that we have rejected socialism is simply misleading," he said at a joint news conference with French President François Mitterrand. "If we can bring people back into the socialist system instead of alienating them we can give socialism a second wind." The host of economic and social problems besetting the Soviet Union have weighed heavily on Gorbachev during this visit, according to French commentators and some officials. Contacts with ordinary Parisians have been few and at times strained. A session with leading writers and academics at Sorbonne University Wednesday was haphazard and poorly organized. However, there were signs of progress in ministerial talks on major trade deals during Gorbachev's trip, which continues on Thursday with a flight to Strasbourg to make the first address by an East bloc leader to the Council of Europe. Nine economic agreements were signed on the first day of his French visit Tuesday.

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Polls this year; seats increased, constituencies revised

By Najwa Najjar
and Ramia Atala

JORDAN — In implementation of His Majesty King Hussein's directives to the government, elections to the Lower House of representatives will be held before the end of this year to enable the citizens to participate in the decision-making process, Prime Minister Sharif Zaid Ibn Shaker announced Wednesday.

In an announcement carried by Radio Jordan and Jordan television, the prime minister said that since the obstacles which had impeded election procedures had been removed, elections could be allowed to take their proper course.

A Royal Decree issued on

Wednesday endorsed an amendment to the 1986 Election Law which increased the number of seats in the Lower House from 72 to 80.

The amendments also included modifications on constituency divisions, which under the revised law, will be divided according to governorates, except for Amman and Irbid governorates.

Under the new law, Amman Governorate, with its total number of seats raised to 21 from 17, will be made up of six constituencies, while Irbid Governorate, with its total number of seats raised to 19 from 18, will be divided into six constituencies.

The amendments also in-

creased the number of seats in Balqa Governorate to eight, up from seven, and Zarqa Governorate was allocated two more seats, to its four. Mafraq Governorate was allocated three seats, up from two.

The number of seats in the remaining governorates were kept the same, as did the number of seats for the basic regions.

An official spokesman at the Ministry of Interior explained that the population of each governorate served as the criteria for the increase in the number of seats in various constituencies.

The new amendment, he added, followed a prolonged and expanded dialogue with the

various public sectors in the country.

The 1986 Election Law was first amended in April 1989 by the government of Zaid Al Rifai. The amendments abolished West Bank representation in view of Jordan's decision to dismantle legal and administrative ties with the occupied territory, and reduced the number of seats to 72 from 142.

The last elections were held in 1987, shortly before Israel's occupation of the West Bank. By-elections were held in 1984 to replace deputies from the previous parliament who had either resigned or passed away.

Parliament was dissolved by the King one day prior to the disengagement decision July 31,

1988. The announcement made Wednesday did not set a specific date for elections.

In Wednesday's statement, the prime minister said the legislature would now assume its normal role of serving the country and would cooperate with the executive and judicial authorities to ensure justice and to help the citizens in exercising their freedom.

"As we make this announcement, we also declare that we are working towards creating an opportune climate, which will enable the three authorities to work together in creating a productive society where justice prevails, a society in which the citizens can exercise their freedom

and where his achievements are protected and his thoughts and expressions are safeguarded," said Sharif Zaid.

The prime minister said that the government's policy would continue to be based on the principles of the Great Arab Revolt and would attempt to achieve its objectives.

He stressed that Jordan would continue to work for achieving Arab unity and give its attention to the Palestinian problem, the focal point in the Kingdom's policy.

Sharif Zaid reaffirmed the special relationship between the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples and reiterated Jordan's

(Continued on page 4)

Premier says economic situation stabilising, improvements expected

JORDAN — Prime Minister Sharif Zaid Ibn Shaker said Wednesday that the economic situation in Jordan was stabilising and that the next few days will see further improvement.

Speaking at a meeting with the president and members of the board of the Amman Chamber of Commerce, Sharif Zaid reviewed the economic situation in the

Kingdom and expressed hope that the difficulties could be overcome.

He said the government was cooperating with all sectors to achieve the principal goal of bringing back stability to the dinar's exchange rate and putting an end to fluctuations in the currency rates.

The prime minister called on all sectors to shoulder their responsibility to increase production and to introduce change in styles of living.

The chamber members expressed determination to exert more efforts to help the country cope with the economic conditions.

Likud okays Shamir election plan with radical changes

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir Wednesday turned back a challenge to his leadership by hardliners in the Likud bloc who opposed his election plan on the occupied West Bank and Gaza trip.

But in reaching a compromise, Shamir accepted the positions of his rivals and may have burdened his initiative with conditions that make it unacceptable to Palestinians.

In a speech before the party's central committee, Shamir endorsed opponents' demands that Arab Palestinians be excluded from voting and that the al-Aqsa uprising be ended as a re-condition for negotiations.

He also said Israel would not accept a Palestinian state or the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). Moshe Katzav, a Shamir backer, said the compromise was to include the principles in the speech without voting on amendments to put the hardline stands into the initiative.

But Trade Minister Ariel Shariv, who had led the opposition,

said on Israeli radio after the meeting: "This decision is binding on the representatives of the Likud in the cabinet."

The plan was approved 20-6 on May 14 by the coalition cabinet, which includes the Labour party. The compromise was a victory for Shamir, who had threatened to resign if the rebel faction voted against his plan.

But it may have limited his room for manoeuvre in future negotiations. Shamir's policy speech, which included four points demanded by the rebels, was adopted with an overwhelming show of hands in support.

The key principles in the resolution adopted by the Likud central committee were:

— Continuing the initiative according to the 1978 Israeli-Egyptian Camp David accords and the government's recent proposals;

— Non-participation of Arab Jerusalem Palestinians in the proposed elections;

— Crushing the uprising before negotiations begin with the Arabs;

— Continued (Jewish) settle-

ment in the occupied territories;

— No foreign sovereignty for any part of the "land of Israel;"

— No Palestinian state in the "land of Israel;"

— No negotiations with terrorist organisations (such as the PLO.)

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has asked Israel to clarify the plan, a foreign ministry spokesman said on Wednesday.

He said visiting U.S. congressmen led by Representative Bill Gray passed on orally 10 questions from Mubarak. Shamir's spokesman said he would study them closely and decide how to respond.

The Jerusalem Post described the 10 points as conditions, including a halt to settlement in the occupied territories and agreement to trade occupied land for peace.

A senior PLO official said Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat was expected in Cairo next week to discuss the issue.

Said Kamal, PLO representative in Cairo, told reporters that Israel must accept the principle of land for peace before elections.

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Government declared Eid holiday starting July 12

AMMAN (Petra) — All government departments and public institutions will be closed for five days starting Wednesday July 12 to mark the Al Adha Eid feast which falls on Thursday, July 13, according to an official statement here Wednesday.

It said that offices will reopen for business on Monday, July 17. Eid Al Adha feast comes at the end of the pilgrimage season in Mecca; and is celebrated by the Arab and Islamic Worlds.

The announcement about Eid Al Adha to fall on July 13 was made here Tuesday evening by Chief Islamic Justice Sheikh Mohammed Mbeian.

NATIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

FORMER MINISTER DIES: An announcement was made in Amman Wednesday of the passing away of Al Khairi, a former minister and member of the Upper House of Parliament. Khairi, who was 82, had served in a number of senior positions which included minister of national economy and agriculture. Born in Ramle, occupied Palestine, in 1907, Khairi obtained a degree from the American University of Beirut in political science and later embarked on civil service. (Petra, J.T.)

ACC AGRICULTURAL MINISTERS TO MEET: Baghdad will host a meeting of ministers of agriculture in the four member Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) countries Thursday to discuss means of stepping up cooperation in agriculture-related fields. Minister of Agriculture Dr. Adnan Badran, who left for the Iraqi capital Wednesday to take part in the meeting, said that integration in agricultural fields between Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, and North Yemen will be the main subject for discussion at the three-day meeting. Badran is accompanied by a senior ministry aide. (Petra)

FUNDS FOR MUNICIPALITIES: The Cabinet Tuesday allocated JD 87,000 from the local institutions aid account at the Cities and Villages Development Bank to a number of municipalities. The Cabinet also decided to grant JD 475,000 from the same account, as interest-free loans to other municipalities to enable them carry out their projects. (Petra)

PTC TO TRANSPORT STUDENTS: The Public Transport Corporation (PTC) has assigned a number of its buses to transport University of Jordan students currently taking summer courses. According to an announcement Wednesday buses have been assigned to carry the students from and to Madaba, Marj Al Hamam, Wahdat, Nazir, Zarqa, Sabab, Taj, Hashimi, Janoubi, Marka; Naser and Hashemi Shimali districts. (Petra)

928 TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS IN ONE DAY: Traffic police registered a total of 928 violations by motorists in a single day, according to a report in Sawt Al Sbaab daily. It said that the violations occurred in the Amman area Monday and JD 2,465 in fines were collected from the violators. (J.T.)

SOVIET STUDENTS VISIT UNIVERSITIES: A student delegation from the University of Tashkent in the Soviet Union Wednesday visited the University of Jordan and Yarmouk University to acquaint themselves with their development and activities. The delegation toured the campus and visited a number of faculties and libraries. (Petra)

TRAINING COURSE ON AUDITING ENDS: A two-week training programme on auditing and financial control ended at the Industrial Development Bank Wednesday. The 20 participants from Jordan, North Yemen, Qatar, and Oman all represented financial institutions in their countries. (Petra)

FILIPINO ENVOY HONOURED: His Majesty King Hussein has bestowed on the Philippines Ambassador Juan Saez the Independence Medal of the First Order at the conclusion of his tour of duty. The Foreign Ministry secretary general delivered the medal during a luncheon banquet held Thursday in the presence of a number of ambassadors and senior Foreign Ministry officials. (Petra)

POLICE OFFICERS GRADUATE: Two batches of police officers, specialising in criminal investigation, graduated here Wednesday at a ceremony held at the Royal Police Academy. Brigadier Mohammad Al Basoul, the academy's commander, reviewed the various aspects of the training course in a speech and noted that combating crime was one of the essential services for the society and contributes to its development. The graduates were noted, have been provided with skill and training to help them carry out their future duties. Apart from criminal investigation procedures, the officers had training in public relations, regulations of civil defence, methods of conducting investigation, military training and other theoretical and practical work. Basoul later distributed the diplomas to the graduates. (Petra)

MASA'DEH RECEIVES SPANISH ENVOY: Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Salem Masa'deh Wednesday discussed with Spanish Ambassador to Jordan Ramon Armengol scopes of cooperation. (Petra)

QATARNEH CHAIRS AQABA MEETING: Ma'an Governor Eid Qatarneh Wednesday chaired a meeting at the Aqaba district committee on the passengers using the Aqaba-Nweibe route. The conference agreed to ask the Arab Maritime Bridge Company to increase the ferry boats' operation on this line, to replace the current ferry boats by spacious ones, and to increase the additional trips. It was also decided to grant permits to all the buses operating in Aqaba to transport passengers from the port to Rabya suburb. (Petra)

JUST STUDENTS VISIT MONUMENT: A student delegation from the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) Wednesday visited the Martyrs' Monument and listened to a briefing on the Great Arab Revolt's goals, objectives, and the contents of the monument which is associated with the revolt and the development of the Jordanian Armed Forces. (Petra)

MAFRAG TRUCK TERMINAL: The municipality of Mafraq has awarded a tender to a local company to carry out the trucks terminal project. The JD 134,000 project includes asphalt 50,000 square metres to be used as a parking area for trucks as well as providing the necessary facilities. The project will be launched in Aug. (Petra)

N. YEMENI TEAM DEPARTS: A North Yemeni delegation from the Ministry of Municipalities and Housing left Amman Wednesday at the conclusion of a month-long visit to Jordan. During the visit, the delegation held talks with Jordanian officials dealing with Jordanian expertise in housing and construction. (Petra)

SEWING COURSE GRADUATES: Chairman of the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) Dr. Abdullah Khatib Wednesday presented certificates to ten women who completed a nine-month sewing course at the Mu'tamed Ibn Abbad Society. Khatib said that GUVS would make a donation of JD 800 to support the society. (Petra)

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- An art exhibition by three Arab artists representing Bahrain, Syria and Jordan at the Housing Bank Art Gallery.
- An art exhibition entitled "Songs of the Earth" by Mohammad Nasrallah at the French Cultural Centre.
- An exhibition of children's books held within the framework of the Ninth Arab Children's Congress at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- A photography exhibition entitled "Constructed Narratives" at the British Council.
- An exhibition of Palestinian heritage at the Professional Associations Complex.
- An exhibition which includes paintings and photos depicting the various activities of the Faculty of Medicine at the Jordan University of Science and Technology.

FILM

- A feature film entitled "Sounder" at the American Centre — 7:00 p.m.

Ministry launches inspection campaign covering poultry farms

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Agriculture Wednesday launched an inspection campaign covering poultry farms in order to determine the number of beneficiaries from a maize distribution programme organised by the Ministry of Supply.

Agriculture Minister Adnan Badran said that the new measure also aims to ensure that the maize is being used specifically for raising poultry only.

The Ministry of Supply, he

said, has sufficient amounts of government subsidised maize to be distributed in the course of this programme.

Meanwhile, Minister of Supply Ibrahim Ayoub announced Wednesday that ministry warehouses can supply farmers with any quantity they need of bran, barley and corn.

He said that the farmers can buy their needs directly from ministry warehouses without resorting to merchants in the local

market.

Ayoub announced that the ministry has floated a tender for the purchase of 50,000 tonnes of corn and consignment is expected to arrive in the coming month.

Another tender will be out in the coming two weeks for the purchase of another 50,000 tonnes.

He said that Ministry of Supply has concluded a contract with Syria to purchase the additional amounts of corn.

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this programme.

A report in Al Ra'i Arabic daily Wednesday said that last April there were eight meningitis cases in the Kingdom, down from 10 to 15 in the past year, but did not disclose the nature of steps taken to reduce the number of cases.

The report quoted Health Ministry officials as saying that

there were no plans for carrying out a mass inoculation campaign against meningitis, but that all the 15,000 Jordanian Muslims that went to Saudi Arabia for this year's pilgrimage had been immunised against the disease.

The officials said meningitis mortality rate stands at 80 to 90 per cent, and the disease which affects children as well as grown ups, causes inflammation in the spinal cord resulting from a viral infection which is highly contagious.

The officials said a victim of

meningitis feels severe headache, starts vomiting and could lose consciousness. Meningitis, they added, is on top of the list of most sinister diseases which normally end in death or permanent paralysis and therefore immediate hospitalisation is required for urgent treatment.

The immunisation of pilgrims against the disease was required by the Saudi authorities, according to the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs which arranged for the inoculation programme before their departure.

Institute for deaf marks silver jubilee

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Holy Land Institute for the Deaf (HLID) in Salt celebrated its silver jubilee this year by announcing the addition of a new wing to the institute's vocational training unit.

This step was taken in order to separate the vocational training programme from the production programme at the Institute, which provides care to deaf children from various parts of Jordan, according to a news letter issued Tuesday to mark the occasion.

The school which was formally opened by His Majesty King Hussein in 1964, cares for 125 deaf children with the help of 50 trained staff.



In addition to traditional learning settings at the institute, the children grow through extensive one-on-one contact with their fellow students.

The newsletter stated that continuous expansion of the Institute's services and the adoption of new training concepts enable the Institute to better develop special education in general and provide education, training and other services for the deaf in order that they may become mature, self-reliant, and well-integrated members of society.

The school which was formally opened by His Majesty King Hussein in 1964, cares for 125 deaf children with the help of 50 trained staff.

The Institute provides preschool kindergarten for up to

three years, primary school services, preparatory school, as well as vocational training in three grades. It also runs a special programme for slow learners and carries out miscellaneous activities.

The newsletter issued a list of names and addresses of private individuals and organisations in Jordan and abroad who have donated funds to promote the Institute's activities.

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The missing commodity

THE EFFORTS of the Higher Arab Committee charged with the mandate to resolve the Lebanese crisis have already earned the support and confidence of the two superpowers, the U.S. and the USSR. The support of the other permanent members of the U.N. Security Council appears also imminent. With such wide international support over and above the total Arab support, there is no way the mission of the Higher Arab Committee can fail. Nevertheless, setbacks may still occur in the global efforts to settle the Lebanese conflict once and for all. Ill-feeling, animosity and conflict of interest between the principal parties to the Lebanese conflict cannot be expected to disappear into thin air just because the international community wants them to. The process of in-depth healing will take much longer time. The return to normalcy in Lebanon clearly needs to be nursed patiently and wisely.

Yet, the firm foundation for a permanent and just settlement of the Lebanese question has been established upon the emergence of an Arab and international unanimity that found expression in the global support for the Arab efforts to stop the bleeding and heal the wounds in Lebanon. What remains to be done is to consolidate the gains already realised by exerting relentless efforts to begin a process of recreating the spirit of brotherhood in Lebanon.

Surely the principal communities in Lebanon are also tired of 15 years of armed conflict that devastated their country and ravaged the souls of the Lebanese people. It is high time that such communities realise that the relative truth and the solution may very well lie between their respective positions. Obviously there is no room for absolute positions that are not amenable to reasonable compromises.

Thus the single most wanted commodity that is still missing in Lebanon and among the Lebanese themselves is the spirit of goodwill. It would therefore be most appropriate if the Higher Arab Committee began to direct its attention to such a noble aspiration by promoting more personal contacts among the leaders of the principal parties in Lebanon under its own auspices. There is no doubt that such personal relations could remove the chill from the existing emotions that unhappily exist among the Lebanese leaders. For as long as the Lebanese leaders are not meeting one another, there is little hope of ever reconciling their bitter differences.



JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

The Shamir peace plan provides material for commentary in Al Ra'i Arabic daily Wednesday. The paper said that for the past 22 years Israel has been adamant in its position and its policies were clearly designed to undermine any peace effort in the region. Following the lapse of 22 years, Shamir has come up with a shaky plan which is being contested by many within the Likud party, led by Shamir, and described as an unacceptable formula by itself by the Arab Nation in general and the Palestinians in particular, the paper noted. It said that the plan is being rejected by the Arabs because they see it as a service to Zionism aiming to achieve its goals and end the intifada without any consideration to the rights of the Arab people of Palestine. But for the extremist elements of the Likud party, the plan represents a means for loosening the Israeli grip on the Palestinians — a move totally opposed by Sharon and other Zionist extremists, the paper continued. It said that if such a shaky plan, which represents nothing for the Arabs, is rejected by the Zionists, what then would be acceptable for them? Isn't it right to believe that the Zionists have no regard to any principles, to the Arab rights and the United Nations Security Council resolutions? concludes the paper.

A Columnist in Al Ra'i daily commends the Soviet influence over the warring parties in Lebanon on the one hand and the Arab countries in the region on the other. Tareq Masa'rew notes that Moscow's influence over Baghdad and Damascus has led Iraq to announce its readiness to stop supplying the rightist elements, led by Michel Aoun with military equipment and led the leader of the Amal movement, Amin Berri, to announce his decision to lift a blockade on East Beirut. He says that Moscow had played a quiet diplomacy and achieved these constructive steps; and through talks with the French president, Gorbachev has also sought to achieve a lasting settlement for the Lebanese problem. The writer says that these Soviet efforts corroborate the endeavours of the Arab League and its mediation committee and help to pave the way for a settlement. This assistance he notes, came from a real friend, one with long standing ties with the Arab World. Let us hope, the writer concludes, that the United States will follow suit and take a constructive step in this direction.

Sawt Al Shabab daily tackled in its editorial a report in the Washington Post newspaper that focused light on differences between the United States and Israel. The paper said that the paper's report which quoted official sources stated that Washington's official policy vis-a-vis the Palestine problem hinges on swapping land for peace, a move totally rejected by Israel. The paper said that if this is true then it means that the United States administration is serious about its declared intention of pursuing efforts to find a solution for the problem. Through its support for the Shamir plan, the Bush administration is now trying to convince the Israeli government to take a second step for the achievement of peace, which it believes, can only be done through the exchange of land for peace, the paper added. It said that the Arab Nation should therefore maintain its drive to make Washington pursue this course of action and at the same time should not offer further concessions to win Israel's favour.

Sudan's new leader — another Numeiri or a Swareddahab?

By P.V. Vivekanand

"NUMEIRI has done the impossible" — that was my first reaction to the news flash on Friday of a military coup in Khartoum. But, as the news was filtered, it appeared that it was a little-known army brigadier, responding to the discontent of the armed forces, who overthrew the government of Sadeq Al Mahdi; and Jaafar Numeiri, despite his sabre-rattling from his exile home in Cairo, had little to do with the swift change of power in the Khartoum presidential palace.

For many it is a relief that it is not Numeiri who has taken over the reins in Khartoum. Many heads, deservedly or otherwise, would have rolled through the streets of the Sudanese capital had the ousted dictator been given the chance to extract revenge for his disgraceful exit in 1985 after 16 years of autocratic rule.

The fate of Mahdi, his cabinet and senior aides is not clear yet. The coup leader, Omar Hassan Al Bashir, has gone on record saying the toppled prime minister is on the run. There is indeed speculation that Mahdi has been executed and the truth is being kept back so as not to antagonise his tribal supporters. Some say Mahdi has crossed the border and sought refuge in a neighbouring country. (It beats logic to take a guess which country that could be; it cannot be Ethiopia, where the rebels are headquartered; it cannot be Libya which has extended a friendly hand towards the junta in Khartoum; it cannot be Egypt where Numeiri is camped; it cannot be Chad, whose leader has made no secret of his hostility for Mahdi and accused him of plotting an invasion of Chad in collusion with Libya; it cannot be Kenya which saw its claim to a border strip challenged by Mahdi. Furthermore, a respected news agency reported that its Khartoum correspondent saw Mahdi being driven to a prison in the first few hours of the coup).

Failures of the Mahdi regime

It may be a little too late to probe the reasons that prompted the army to take matters into its own hands and assume power. But the fact remains that being a bad politician was perhaps Mahdi's major crime. His glaring indecisiveness in dealing with political infighting within his coalition and the rebellion in the south could easily be seen as the most pronounced shortcoming of his reign. Coupled with the deteriorating economic situation in the country, these failings fuelled mounting despair among the Sudanese. It was clear that Mahdi wanted to have his cake and eat it too. He puffed out around when it came to reasserting his authority through clearly stating his government's objectives and approach, whether in the context of consolidating the country's new-found democracy after the years of totalitarian rule under Numeiri, improving living conditions for the people, or taking advantage of rebel overtures for peace. He did a four-corner trapose stunt with coalition partners, almost making a mockery of the people's mandate. He was incoherent when it came to taking a final decision on the issue of Islamic laws imposed by Numeiri. His economic experts were at a loss to take advantage of the sympathetic stand of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

To cap everything he failed to secure the army's loyalty simply because he did not heed its call for a make-it-or-break-it move with

the southern rebellion. When his delegation was putting final touches to the first concrete step for peace in south after talks with the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in Addis Ababa in mid-June, Mahdi was busy issuing warlike cries against the rebels in Khartoum as if he had nothing to do with the negotiations. If he was trying to please someone, then certainly he botched the effort. His support for a determined military stand against the rebels was not matched with deeds; for, it was the clear the army was telling him either to order an all-out offensive against the rebels or to opt for a peace approach without involving the army. "Give us arms or give the rebels the olive branch," the army was demanding. He did neither. If anything, he allowed ill-founded political considerations to assume centre-stage when national interests were at stake and let things hang when they needed securing. A sad demise indeed for the leader for whom the country had a lot of hopes after years of the near-dictatorship rule of Numeiri.

Bashir's agenda

It is premature to assess what lies in store for the Sudanese under the military regime. First indications are that the junta wants to get back to first base with the country's powerful neighbours — Egypt and Libya. The motivations are clear. On the one hand, having such allies will help Khartoum gain a position of military strength — and a bargaining stand — against the rebellion, one of the major problems facing any effort to restore national order. On the other hand, enlisting Egypt as a close friend will ensure pan-Arab, as well as Western, political support for the regime. Above all, it will also help reassure a majority of the Sudanese people who were disappointed with the erosion of the traditionally strong relations with their Egyptian brothers. The surprising calm with which the Sudanese greeted the coup was an indication of the displeasure of the man-on-the-street with the Mahdi regime.

But will such political/military stunts propel the junta through the very real economic hardships plaguing the country? More importantly, what is to be the fate of the millions of Sudanese on the brink of starvation in the countryside? As long as Bashir does not come up with an unambiguous proposal acceptable to the rebels to settle the revolt to the south there can be no real hope for the victims of famine and drought. For them, it matters little whether such an approach has anything to do with Islamic laws, democracy or political freedoms. Quite literally, they have no stomach for anything except food.

Bashir has said he will not interfere with international relief efforts in the south or anywhere else in the famine-hit country. But, the tacit agreement the agencies reached with the rebels on transport of relief supplies through SPLA-held territory had a lot to do with an understanding that also involved the Mahdi regime. Now, with Bashir, reportedly a veteran soldier who ferociously fought the rebels over the past several years and advocated a military solution to the revolt, leaning towards Egypt and Libya, will the rebels continue to honour their commitment? A lot depends on what Bashir does next, whether he launches his own version of a peace plan coupled with a military assault in the south to weaken the bargaining position of the SPLA or whether he accepts and appreciates the reality that the rebels are indeed Sudanese with genuine grievances, that they are not seeking

sedition and are desirous of an equitable settlement based on an end to the traditional domination of the south by the north.

Tuesday night's dramatic announcement of a unilateral ceasefire in the south and a general amnesty for all those who took up arms against the government — in essence the SPLA — and the invitation that Bashir said he was extending to SPLA leader John Garang to talk in Khartoum are the strongest signs yet of the junta's drive for peace in the south. But how far are the rebels willing to accept the offer?

Outlook for democracy

Back in Khartoum, the near-total democracy that the Sudanese enjoyed for the past three years has left a deep impression. There is no indication whatsoever yet of Bashir following the footsteps of the general, Abdul Rahman Swareddahab, who wrote his name in golden letters in history as the sole Arab to have reached the top of the leadership rung but who willingly relinquished power to the people through democracy after toppling Numeiri. There is no denying the fact the Mahdi years brought Sudan democratic freedoms, including free press and parliamentary life, though, towards the regime's last months, there was an increasing feeling among the people that military rule might not be so bad either.

From the first look of things Bashir appears to be of the same mould of the generals who ruled Sudan for most part since independence in 1956. He has declared a state of emergency, dissolved political parties and imposed a blanket ban on independent newspapers, as well as clamped a night-time curfew on Khartoum (though observed by the army with leniency in many parts, according to reports). He has given senior generals the boot, promoted himself and assumed the sweeping powers of prime minister, defence minister and armed force commander all rolled into one. Above all, he has promised to bring corrupt politicians and officials under Mahdi to book. Taking for granted that Bashir fulfils all his promises, including setting up a civilian council at an unspecified date, it still remains a long shot that the calm that prevails in Khartoum today will continue to hold.

Maybe there is euphoria in Sudan over the transition, but is it well-founded? Can a career military officer hope to live up to the expectations of his people that he would lead them out of the economic quagmire that has plagued them for decades? Will Bashir be able to draw up a sure and steady political course towards addressing his country's problems without violating the rights of the Sudanese people who are surely not willing to give up without a fight?

Can Bashir ensure that the plight of the starving millions of his countrymen are not left neglected amid the powerplay in Khartoum? It has been widely accepted that Bashir was prompted by the discontent in the armed forces over Mahdi to stage the coup. But what reassurance do the Sudanese have that the taste of the power at the top does not get into his head and set his country's democratic process on a reverse course? Can he be another Abdul Rahman Swareddahab and step down voluntarily after setting the house in order for democracy to take its course?

LETTER

For the sake of the little ones

To the Editor:

I

AM WRITING to applaud your editorial of Monday, June 26, on the needs of orphans in Jordanian society. As an American mother of three residing in this great Arab country, I have become involved with various children at the Ashrafiya Orphanage. It's a great credit to this society that these children have had the opportunity to be born, albeit sometimes through hard circumstances. What a contrast to American society where hundreds of babies are killed every day through abortion. May this never happen here in Jordan! It's also a great credit to this society that they have strived to take care of these children through the S.O.S. Village, Schneller School, and various orphanages.

The only obstacle standing in the way of God answering this prayer is the law prohibiting adoption. I know of about twelve God-fearing American families who either cannot have children or cannot have any more children, who would take any number of these babies, toddlers, and/or children today! God tells us to "defend the cause of the weak and fatherless."

I appeal to the governing officials of this country to change this law and let these children have a real home with adoptive parents who will love, care, and provide for them. I will do my part and find families to adopt them. Will you please do your part and change this law? Together we can make homes for these children a reality!

Monica S. Brown
P.O. Box: 910627
Amman.

Attieh

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(Continued from page 1)
continued support for the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in its struggle to achieve the aspirations of the Palestinian people.
The prime minister also referred to Jordan's continued en-

deavours to bolster its ties with Arab and foreign countries on all levels.
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Salem Masa'deh will hold a press conference to give more details on the election law and elections.

Following is a list of governorates and the seat allocations:

Governorate	Number of deputies
I. Amman	21 seats
a. First district (Basman, Marka and Tareq)	3 (Muslim)
b. The second district (Yarmouk, Nsour, Ra's Al Ain and Bader)	3 (Muslim)
c. The third district (Amman city, Zahran and Abdali)	4 (Muslim — one of them Circassian or Shishani) 1 (Christian)
d. The fourth district (Al Quweish, Al Juweideh, Abu Alanda, Khirbet Al Suk, Jawa, Al Yadoud, Um Oseir, and Muqalleh in addition to the subdistricts of Sahab, Giza and Muwaqqar. Excluded are the bedouins from the middle part of the Kingdom)	2 (Muslim)
e. The fifth district (Shafa Badran, Abu Nuseir, Jubeihah, Sweileh, Tal'a Al Ali, Um Al Summaq and Khilda in addition to the subdistricts of Wadi Al Sir and Na'our)	5 (Muslim — one of them Circassian or Shishani)
f. The sixth district (the district of Madaba and the subdistrict of Dhiban)	2 (Muslim) 1 (Christian)

II. Irbid
a. Irbid city and adjoining areas
8 (Muslim)
1 (Christian) Deputy

b. Jerash
2 (Muslim)

c. Ajloun
2 (Muslim)
1 (Christian)

d. Ramtha and Bania Kanan
3 (Muslim)

e. Al Qurah and North Ghor
2 (Muslim)

III. Balqa
6 (Muslim)
2 (Christian)

IV. Kerak
7 (Muslim)
2 (Christian)

V. Maan
5 (Muslim)

VI. Zerqa
5 (Muslim — 1 of them Circassian or Shishani)
1 (Christian)

VII. Mafraq
3 (Muslim)

VIII. Tafleah
3 (Muslim)

IX. Bedouins
a. North
2 (Muslim)

b. Central
2 (Muslim)

c. South
2 (Muslim)

IX. North bedouins:
Banu Khaled, Al Sarhan, Al Iss, Al Sardiyeh, Al Masa'd, Al Sharfat, Al Amlat, Al Zubaid.

II. Central bedouins: The Bani Sakhr tribes — Al Ghubeen, Al Amer, Al Ka'abeh, Sleit, Al Hashib, Al Kharshan, Al Jabour, Al Shar'a, Al Badarin, Al Taybin, Al Hamad, Al Qudah, Al Salim.

III. Southern bedouins: The Huweilita tribes — Al Matalqah, Al Tawaiba, Al Steimaniyeen, Al Najdat, Al Nu'imat, Al Mar'aieh, Al Zawaideh, Al Mana'in, Al Hajaya, Al Atoum, Al Darawshed, Al Damaniyah, Al Hidhan, Al Batoumeh, Al Zalabiah, Al Sa'dieh, Al Rashayeh, Al Ammarine, Al Hayawat, Al Sabieh, Al Mashiyeh, Al Raba'ieh, Al Takat'a.

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SEPT / SEPT

Le cessez-le-feu «immédiate» au LIBAN et la levée du blocus terrestre du secteur chrétien décrétés lundi par les partis libanais pro-syriens, laisse espérer une amélioration de la situation après plus d'un mois de négociation délicate engagée par le triumvirat de la Ligue arabe. Annoncée à Damas par le chef du mouvement chiite Amal, Nabi Berri, la décision inclut également la réouverture de l'aéroport international de Beyrouth. C'est chose faite depuis mardi midi. Salutaires pour la population, ces mesures étaient attendues après l'engagement pris par l'Irak trois jours plus tôt de stopper toute livraison d'armes aux troupes du général Aoun et aux miliciens des Forces Libanaises. Reste que la Syrie a refusé de rompre le blocus maritime, imposé au camp chrétien et que cette lueur de réelle trêve est intervenue au lendemain d'un week-end d'affrontements meurtriers, notamment entre Amal et le Hezbollah pro-iranien. Pour précaires qu'il puissent se révéler, les progrès réalisés ces derniers jours constituent un succès pour la troïka algéro-maroco-saoudienne, instituée par le sommet de Casablanca le 26 mars dernier. Troïka, qui exigeait la fin des hostilités comme préalable à l'ouverture d'un débat parlementaire visant à réformer le système politique libanais, souhaité par le camp musulman.

Si les Beyrouthins ont de quoi demeurer sceptiques malgré les signes de bonne volonté affichés par les gouvernements rivaux du Liban, l'OLP pour sa part a ouvertement appuyé dimanche le «changement qualitatif» de la position européenne en faveur des droits des Palestiniens. Numéro deux de la centrale palestinienne, Abou Iyad a notamment souligné l'intérêt particulier accordé à la présence française de la CEE, entamée le 1er juillet. Qualifiée de «grand ami», la France pent selon lui jouer un rôle primordial dans la résolution du conflit avec Israël, en faisant pression sur Washington au sein du Conseil de sécurité des Nations-Unies. L'appel lancé par les Douze en faveur d'une participation directe de l'OLP à toute conférence internationale de paix, a également été salué par la «direction unifiée» du soulèvement dans les territoires occupés. Un hommage qui contraste, avec ses violentes critiques à l'encontre des Etats-Unis, accusés de «duplicité» et de «partialité» en faveur d'Israël, dans son dialogue avec les Palestiniens. La confiance croissante de la résistance dans la diplomatie européenne sera vraisemblablement évoquée de nouveau à l'occasion du congrès du Fatah, principale composante de l'OLP. Premier congrès depuis 1980, qui doit se réunir avant la fin du mois pour remplacer notamment cinq des quinze membres du comité central du mouvement, dont Abou Jihad, assassiné l'année dernière par les Israéliens. (D'après agences).

EN BREF

Precision. La dette extérieure de la Jordanie a atteint 8,347 milliards de dollars à la fin de l'année dernière, a précisé samedi le gouverneur de la Banque centrale, Mohammad Said Al-Naboulsi. L'ardoise militaire représentait à elle seule près de 2,8 milliards. M. Naboulsi a indiqué que «la différence avec le montant précédemment annoncé de 8,1 milliards de dollars provient du fait que les informations en [sa] possession étaient incomplètes».

Partis politiques. Une charte nationale, autorisant la formations de partis politiques dans le royaume, est actuellement en cours d'élaboration au sein du gouvernement. Le texte, sans antécédent dans l'histoire du pays, figurent en annexe de la constitution et définira précisément les règles de la vie politique, de la justice sociale et de l'économie nationales, ont indiqué dimanche les autorités. Le projet devrait être soumis à un référendum organisé à l'occasion des élections législatives prévues avant la fin de l'année.

Multipartisme. L'Assemblée populaire algérienne a adopté dimanche la loi sur les «associations à caractère politique», instituant le multipartisme dans le pays. Parmi les trente quatre amendements discutés par le Parlement depuis le 20 juin, figurent le financement des partis légaux par l'Etat, l'interdiction aux militaires, policiers et magistrats d'adhérer et l'obligation pour tout mouvement de soumettre une demande préalable au ministère de l'Intérieur.

Peages. Le ministère des Travaux Publics et du Logement étudie actuellement un projet d'instauration de peages sur les routes principales du royaume. Selon le gouvernement, les taxes seraient limitées à certains tronçons très fréquentés et serviraient à l'entretien des résements.

CCA. Les responsables des Chambres de commerce et d'industrie des pays membres du Conseil de coopération arabe (CCA) s'entre tiendront le mois prochain à Amman des perspectives de créations d'entreprises privées communautaires. Ils discuteront également de l'éventuelle mise en place d'un secrétariat général des Quatre (Jordanie, Irak, Egypte et Yémen du Sud), destiné à succéder au comité créé lors de leur première conférence au mois de mai.

Gorbatchev à Paris. Le numéro un soviétique est arrivé mardi à Paris pour une visite officielle de trois jours. Une visite dense en entretiens politiques, notamment avec le chef de l'Etat français, François Mitterrand. Les deux hommes devaient se rencontrer à trois reprises et évoquer les questions du désarmement, du renforcement des relations commerciales bilatérales. MM. Gorbatchev et Mitterrand avaient également l'intention d'étudier la possibilité d'une étroite collaboration pour mettre un terme à la guerre du Liban.

Chypre européenne. Le Parlement chypriote s'est prononcé le week-end dernier en faveur de l'entrée de l'île au sein de la Communauté économique européenne (CEE). Les députés ont appelle le gouvernement à présenter une demande officielle d'adhésion avant la fin de l'année. Adhésion, qui selon une majorité d'entre eux mettrait fin à la partition de Chypre.

Profil bas à Cuba. Sept des quatorze officiers cubains, impliqués dans un trafic international d'armes et de drogue, ont été condamnés à mort mardi par la Cour martiale de la Havane. Parmi eux figurent l'ex-général Arnaldo Ochoa, accusé de haute trahison. Le scandale porte notamment sur des activités illégales avec les guerilleros colombiens du mouvement émancipateur «M 19», les dirigeants sandinistes du Nicaragua ainsi qu'avec les autorités anglaises.

Faux dollars. Plus d'un million de faux dollars américains ont récemment été mis en circulation sur le marché noir israélien. Selon les enquêteurs, les billets verts incriminés sont d'excellente... facture.

Anti-crack. Plus de deux mille personnes ont été interpellées le week-end dernier en Floride dans le cadre d'une opération de police sans précédent contre le trafic et la consommation de crack, un dérivé bon marché de la cocaïne. Deux jours durant, mille policiers ont quadrillé les principales villes de l'Etat, appréhendant consommateurs et petits revendeurs. La plupart d'entre eux ont été remis en liberté après paiement d'une caution de cinq mille à dix mille dollars.

Commerce. L'Italie est le premier producteur mondial d'objets de culture, avec un total de ventes dépassant 1,07 milliard de dollars, selon une étude effectuée à l'occasion du premier salon national des entreprises de ce secteur en pleine croissance. Les fabricants de la Botte, essentiellement localisés en Toscane, en Lombardie et en Vénétie se distinguent notamment par leurs innovations dans le domaine des équipements de surveillance et d'entretenir des tableaux et autres fresques, ainsi qu'en matière de confessionnal insolite. Il fallait y penser.

Moscou en patins. Sept jeunes Français ont quitté Rennes, dans l'ouest de l'Hexagone, samedi dernier, pour gagner Moscou en patins à roulettes. Accompagnés par onze camarades, qui ont préféré emprunter une bicyclette, ils appartiennent à une association enregistrée «SVP» (ski-vélo-patins), et espèrent arriver le 17 août dans la capitale soviétique après avoir parcouru près de 3000 kilomètres.

Prénom: Dieu. L'état civil de la ville de Kiel, dans le nord de la RFA, a refusé d'enregistrer «Gott» (Dieu en allemand), prénom choisi pour leur enfant par de jeunes parents particulièrement pieux. Le père, qui s'était adressé à une commission des lieux pour obtenir le gain de cause a été débouté par les juristes qui ont estimé que «Dieu» n'était pas un nom pour un petit garçon. Sans appel.

Le festival de Jerash s'est ouvert hier

Pour la culture et dans la controverse

800 artistes de 19 pays invités, 5000 à 10000 spectateurs attendus: le festival de Jerash reste la plus grande manifestation artistique du monde arabe. Sur fond de polémique autour du coût d'un événement que certains remettent en cause.



Du folklore au ballet classique,

des orchestres populaires à la musique de chambre, du monde arabe aux pays occidentaux ou asiatiques, le huitième festival de Jerash affiche une totale fidélité aux objectifs assignés à l'événement dès sa création, il y a neuf ans: «Le refus de tout ostracisme et le brassage culturel», comme le rappelle son directeur, Akram Masaewi. Les trois coups frappés hier soir au Théâtre Sud de la cité antique par les danseurs japonais du Shochiku Kagedi



pour l'édition 89. «La campagne publicitaire menée par la compagnie aérienne Royal Jordanian a touché les pays du Golfe, l'Europe et les Etats-Unis. Elle se traduit, entre autres par la présence de plus de 100 journalistes venus couvrir la manifestation».

Qu'en l'attribue à la présence de troupes prestigieuses comme le Ballet du Nord (voir ci-dessous) et le Ballet de Leningrad, ou au théâtre et à la poésie égyptienne, libanaise, tunisienne

doté d'un solide répertoire tant classique que contemporain, marqué par l'empreinte de George Balanchine, monstre de la chorégraphie du XXe siècle.

Deux œuvres du maître figurent au programme de la prestation offerte par les artistes hexagonaux ce week-end: «Tarantella», sur une musique du compositeur Louis Moreau Gottschalk, et «Who Cares?», dont la première fut donnée par Alfonso Catá, avant d'entamer deux grandes tournées. La première en octobre prochain en Asie du Sud-Est (Hong-Kong, Séoul, Taiwan et Djakarta); la seconde aux Etats-Unis, de la côte Est à la côte Ouest, programmée en avril et mai 1990.

Créée en 1983 sous la direction d'Alfonso Catá, la compagnie a été domiciliée à Ronbaix, dans le département du Nord, à deux pas de Lille et de la frontière belge. Centre chorégraphique national depuis 1985, le Ballet s'est forgé en quelques années une solide réputation internationale. Voué à une double mission de création et de diffusion, il s'est également

réalisé... l'écho international du festival est indéniable. Les organisateurs escomptent ainsi entre 5000 et 10000 spectateurs, tant Jordaniens, qu'étrangers.

D'ores et déjà considéré comme un succès, le 8e festival a cependant dû faire face à de nombreuses et virulentes critiques. Argument majeur de ses détracteurs, son coût, estimé à plus de 200 000 dinars. Ses plus farouches opposants ont notamment mis en doute l'«opportunité d'un tel luxe» au moment où la Jordanie traverse une crise financière et économique aigüe. Reproche d'autant plus justifié à leurs yeux que le déficit enregistré en 1988 a atteint 29000 dinars et qu'il devrait s'établir cette année autour de 19000 dinars.

«Ils oublient que le festival

bénéficie indirectement aux restaurants, aux compagnies de transport, aux commerçants installés sur le site», répond Akram Masaewi. Tout comme il s'ombrage de dire que les artistes étrangers sont tous pris en charge par leur propres pays et que nous ne payons que les prestations de deux ou trois formations jordanienes.

Requête irrecevable, estime Akram Masaewi. «Les places les plus chères coûtent 4 dinars et elles se limitent aux représentations des ballets français et soviétiques. Quand aux emplacements commerciaux, nous en avons réservés aux artisans et vendeurs de la ville». Rejetant la controverse, le directeur du festival lui préfère une question de fond: «La culture est-elle une affaire rentable ou contribue-t-elle à l'éducation et à la maturité des peuples?»

Alain Renon.



Photo Peter Perzko

Le Ballet du Nord au grand complet

Ils et elles seront tous là, sur la scène antique du Théâtre Sud de Jerash, pour deux représentations samedi et dimanche. Les trente deux danseurs du Ballet du Nord, ambassadeurs de la culture française à l'occasion de la huitième édition du festival.

Créée en 1983 sous la direction d'Alfonso Catá, la compagnie a été domiciliée à Ronbaix, dans le département du Nord, à deux pas de Lille et de la frontière belge. Centre chorégraphique national depuis 1985, le Ballet s'est forgé en quelques années une solide réputation internationale. Voué à une double mission de création et de diffusion, il s'est également

rapé français Jean-Paul Comelin, et mises en musique par Berioz.

Après la Jordanie, le Ballet du Nord doit se rendre en Angleterre, en Italie (pour la présentation à la fin de ce mois de «Marie-Antoinette», créée par Alfonso Catá), avant d'entamer deux grandes tournées. La première en octobre prochain en Asie du Sud-Est (Hong-Kong, Séoul, Taiwan et Djakarta); la seconde aux Etats-Unis, de la côte Est à la côte Ouest, programmée en avril et mai 1990.

Représentation les 8 et 9 juillet à 21h30 (Théâtre Sud). Prix des places: 4 dinars.

Ecoles fermées en Cisjordanie

Apprendre malgré tout

Tandis qu'en Jordanie les étudiants attendent les résultats du Tawjih, les jeunes Palestiniens de Cisjordanie sont privés d'école pour la deuxième année consécutive. Une scolarité clandestine s'est organisée peu à peu pour que les enfants ne deviennent pas analphabètes, mais aussi pour garantir une formation professionnelle.

Une fois n'est pas coutume, les habitants d'un village des environs de Ramallah, en Cisjordanie, se retrouvent pour faire la fête. Une fête silencieuse, dans une atmosphère lourde, à quelques centaines de mètres des soldats israéliens. Les villageois arrivent par petits groupes pour voir l'exposition d'artisanat traditionnel palestinien, qui témoigne du travail accompli par 25 femmes en 8 semaines d'apprentissage clandestin.

Sur les murs peints en bleu de deux petites pièces aménagées en salles d'exposition de fortune, les longues robes en velours noir ornées de broderies aux couleurs vives côtoient des napperons décorés au point de croix ou des draperies palestiniennes brodées. Les visiteurs grignotent des gâteaux et circulent lentement, à quelques centaines de mètres des soldats israéliens. Les villageois arrivent par petits groupes pour voir l'exposition d'artisanat traditionnel palestinien, qui témoigne du travail accompli par 25 femmes en 8 semaines d'apprentissage clandestin.

Les fermettes d'école, d'abord sporadiques puis systématiques avec l'amplification de l'intifada, ont gâché deux années scolaires et laissé inactifs près de 350 000 élèves en Cisjordanie, du jardin d'enfant à l'université. Un temps déconcerté et convaincu que les établissements réouvriront bientôt, les Palestiniens se sont organisés, à partir de mars 1988, pour mettre sur pied une école clandestine et la culture palestinienne, explique Samia, l'une des élèves de l'atelier. Pour nous, c'est la preuve qu'on peut conserver une identité malgré l'occupation qui nous étouffe. Une occupation qui, depuis deux ans, prive les jeunes Palestiniens d'éducation.

Une scolarité parallèle s'est ainsi mise en place tant bien que mal, pour parer au plus urgent:

Apprendre à lire et à écrire aux plus jeunes et donner un métier aux plus âgés. L'éducation est notre bien le plus précieux, c'est notre avenir et la base de notre nation. C'est pour ça que les Israéliens s'y attaquent. Mais nous ne les laisserons pas fabriquer une génération d'analphabètes et de chômeurs», s'insurge un instituteur de Ramallah, qui enseigne dans la clandestinité.

Reste que les élèves ne peuvent rencontrer leur professeur qu'une fois par semaine et que les conditions précaires affaiblissent la portée de l'enseignement. Plusieurs classes d'une dizaine d'élèves se retrouvent parfois entassées dans un petit appartement, loué pour la circonstance. Sans chaises ni tableau noir, les cours se déroulent dans la hantise d'une intervention militaire.

Pendant l'exposition, les femmes évoquent leurs consignes pour déjouer la vigilance des soldats: «On devait changer le lieu des cours le plus souvent possible et parler à mi-voix pour ne pas attirer l'attention». En 8 semaines, des jeunes filles, qui ont interrompu leurs études, des mères de famille ou des femmes au chômage ont appris un métier en cachette. L'une d'entre elles avait commencé une licence d'économie à l'université de Bir Zeit. Aujourd'hui, elle ne croit plus à la réouverture des écoles. Si elle a choisi d'apprendre la broderie, c'est aussi parce qu'elle incarne une culture palestinienne recueillie jour après jour par l'occupation israélienne.

Florence Montell

Elections législatives confirmées

Le premier ministre Zeid Ben Shaker a confirmé hier soir la tenue d'élections législatives dans le royaume avant la fin de l'année. Retransmis par la radio nationale, le communiqué du premier ministre n'a cependant pas donné de date précise pour la tenue du scrutin, qui selon la plupart des observateurs pourrait avoir lieu au mois de novembre.

«Nous nous efforçons de créer le climat propice à la collaboration [des pouvoirs législatif, exécutif et judiciaire]», a-t-il notamment indiqué, sans préciser le cadre législatif dans lequel se déroulerait le vote. Zeid Ben Shaker a par ailleurs réaffirmé que conformément au décret royal du 15 avril dernier, le nouveau Parlement comprendrait 80 sièges et non plus 72. Le gouverneur d'Amman, avec désormais 21 sièges à pourvoir, a été divisé en six circonscriptions, a-t-il ajouté. L'urid passe de 18 à 19 députés, Balqa de 7 à 8, Zarqa de 4 à 6 et Mafrqa de 2 à 3.

Ces modifications, a conclu le premier ministre, sont dûs à la fois à la rupture des liens avec le Cisjordanie ainsi qu'à la croissance démographique élevée dans ces régions.

A.R.

Cette modification, a conclu le premier ministre, sont dûs à la fois à la rupture des liens avec le Cisjordanie ainsi qu'à la croissance démographique élevée dans ces régions.

C'est sans doute dans l'organisation de la course qu'interviennent les véritables changements. Ainsi note-t-on l'amorce d'un retour aux fins d'étape dans les grandes villes, où les aires d'arrivée sont plus spacieuses et où les capacités d'hébergement permettent de faire face au gigantisme qui caractérise désormais l'épreuve.

Autres innovations: le renforcement des contrôles anti-dopage et une chasse organisée à la «poussette» ou à la «trotte» dans les montées de cols. Des commissaires de course, installés à bord d'hélicoptères, pourront sanctionner sur le champ les coureurs encourageant leurs supporters à mettre la main à la pâte. D'autres, équipés de caméras sur les motos officielles, ont été chargés d'enregistrer les flagrants délits.

Modifications, innovations, retouches: autant de mesures qui n'ont rien de bien révolutionnaire, mais qui illustrent un désir réel de nouvelles formules capables de conserver au Tour de France son prestige actuel. La vraie «révolution» reste à venir.

André Daoudal.

Poésie

Ma ville

Plus grande que la grandeur, ma ville est une joie versée dans les rues. Toutes les époques de l'histoire se croisent dans ma ville, comme si elle avait des cheveux blancs. Ma ville a des yeux fatigués de lecture. L'après-midi, elle

An Egyptian writer speaks frankly about:

Probing the heart and soul

By Katie Sabet

CAIRO — Journalist and writer Sekina Fouad likes to go straight to the point and look at facts, especially social and cultural issues. Her sometimes incisive personality has made her a controversial figure on Egypt's cultural scene, but she has managed to make herself heard through her novels, a weekly column devoted to radio and television programmes, and through a magazine she edits.

With her light-coloured skin, almond-shaped eyes and a mouth that does not often smile, Sekina Fouad resembles the heroines in her novels. She welcomes her guest to a small apartment on Dokki Street that's buried under flamboyant trees. In the living room the walls are covered with book-lined shelves, with stacks of videocassettes. Where you expect to find comfortable couches and coffee tables stands an enormous desk littered with papers.

Obviously, work takes up a large part of her life. It's intellectual work, yet she brings to it a great sensitivity and awareness of other people's feelings.

Following are excerpts from a recent interview she gave:

Question: Could you explain what in your background led you to choose your career?

Answer: "I was born in Port Said, near the sea. It's probably why all the characters in my novels share the traits of seafaring people: they are strong-willed, they like challenges, they persevere ... and they believe in a better future. When I was growing up the towns on the Suez Canal experienced the fear and danger of war, with the occupa-

tion of Mount Sinai (by Israeli troops); people were mobilised and ready to sacrifice everything; that's where I learned what courage meant. Then I came to Cairo to enrol at the university, but I was married before graduating — I like to do things fast, taking life slow kills me! Then I went to work, and I was lucky to do what I enjoyed most. I am convinced, though, that studies and work did not shape my personality much ... we are the product of the environment where we grew up, for me the sea has always been the main factor," she said.

Q. Is it the sea which inspired you to be an activist, almost a pioneer figure in art circles?

A. "The sea, and war. Circumstances were such that I had to grow up quickly: there was no time to enjoy the sweetness of childhood. I understood early that what looks calm on the surface can hide an abyss of despair. I learned that a smile can hide anguish, and that the most insignificant person can become a hero because of his capacity to endure."

Q. You are one of a few women in the Middle East who have the means to express their opinion publicly because of their profession. Millions of women are not as lucky: what do you have to say to them?

A. "I have no particular message for them, but I am trying to reach out to the women who can spread a message to tell them that we must be the instruments through which all women can speak. In my books I try to connect to the common experience of women, to break out of my subjective limits to reach a much larger reality reflecting the

life of all Egyptian women."

Q. Have you thought about producing your own television programme? And what sort of programmes do you favour?

A. I am not fond of images. My relationship to the written word is more satisfying. As I think my weekly column on television allows some influence on programming, that's the extent of my work with images! I push for TV productions investigating social issues and providing some advice, like "Rissala" (Message). I suggested that this show be extended to one or two hours, with the cooperation of lawyers, doctors and psychologists who could help people solve their problems. Also, I would like to see again on television productions like "Les Gens du Caire" (People of Cairo) or "Usages et Coutumes" (Customs and Mores) which mirrored our society in the 1960s. It would be interesting to watch where we are now."

Q. What is your evaluation of Egypt's current drama productions, in the theatre, the movies and television?

A. "I don't thin Egypt's people, its beauty, history and hardships are well represented. Many artists and producers do not seem to understand their role or responsibilities. Today's art is a pale heir if you compare it to this nation's 7000-year history and its wealth of human resources through out centuries past. The recent period when we saw Egypt open its doors wide to everything foreign generated a form of art that reminds me of a skin disease. Gone was the art that probes the human soul and heart.

Q. Why do you think this happened?

A. "We are just coming out of a period where we had lost track of spiritual values to focus on the material aspects of life. It affected art, as well as our concept of work, education and culture in general. Let's not forget also the spread of images of all sorts that now pervade our life; not that images are without value or superficial, but they encourage intellectual laziness. Years ago the French author Georges Dubhame had predicted that culture would decline when images would dominate, and he was speaking before television was invented! Many intellectuals have lost courage and feel useless when confronted with troops of image producers giving us inspiration that's easy to consume."

Q. Do you believe that censorship is a factor in today's artistic creations?

A. "We live in a democratic society where we enjoy freedom of expression. However, we are bearing the consequences of a previous era when censorship struck without logic. The system in place still allows a bureaucrat with limited education or a young university graduate to judge the merits of authors like Nobel Prize-winner Naguib Mahfouz, Yehia Hakki or Youssef Idris. When publishing my books and articles I saw first-hand what a free society we had, but I also saw censors act arbitrarily, often because of ignorance or because they misunderstood."

Q. Do you see television playing a positive role in the development of Egypt?

A. "Television could have a very influential role when it comes to the economy, society and education, for example warning

against old customs that should be discarded. But we should have a concerted effort among TV producers. There could be special programmes or even musical entertainment with a message, whatever it takes to reach a large segment of the population. And the first message should be to build more faith in our country and in the virtues of hard work. Artists should warn us about what society will be like if we continue saying 'it's not my problem' and pursue selfish goals."

"I would ask psychologists, sociologists and educators to collaborate on programmes that can be understood by children as well as adults and would implant the ideas that we each have a role to play, we each should give our best. I would be happy if as a result a spectator just goes to clean up his room!"

Q. Are you happy with your own work?

A. "No, I am never satisfied."

Q. One of your novels, "La Nuit Ou Fatma A Ete Arrestee" (The night Fatma was arrested) was recently made into a film, with Faten Hamama — a prestigious Egyptian actress — in the role of Fatma. Wasn't it something very satisfying?"

A. "It was a fantastic experience thanks to Mrs. Fatma, who is exceptional. She confirms my belief that success is based not only on raw talent, but also on patience, perseverance, intelligence and personal sacrifice. This great lady of the Egyptian cinema has devoted her life to her art, without compromising in any way. She is not one of these artists led by their whims and passions."

Q. But I must admit that her Fatma is not the character in my book; the film focuses too much on the individual instead of making her only the symbol of what a whole group of people feels and thinks. The movie also did not show on Fatma the stigma of suffering and tiredness. But then a movie is always a variation on the vision from which the writer creates."

Q. Recently you agreed to step over the barrier between film and book to write the script for another movie based on a novel



Writer Sekina Fouad says that women who can spread a message "must be the instruments through which all women can speak."

you wrote which is titled "Tarwid El Ragol" (The Training of Man). How is it coming along?

A. "The pain is incredible. I feel trapped and very sorry for myself! I feel uneasy because writing a movie script does not fit my temperament: I am used to doing what I like, when I feel like it — be it in the kitchen or when I face a blank sheet of paper. To me writing is a love story, while doing a script is something technical; of course there is creativity involved, but I am not alone with my characters, shaping them the way I want to. I don't like mechanical rules and people intervening between me and my characters."

Women's worst critics

Q. This movie which is causing you so much trouble will look at problems in relationships between men and women. The main characters will be played by Mahmoud, Mousri and Raghdia. Could you tell us more about it?

A. "I wrote "Tarwid El Ragol" after a long talk with Tawfiq el Hakim, whose perception of the relationship between an educated man and a woman is very disappointing. You would think that a man with a formal education, because of the knowledge he has gained and his intelligence, would show respect and empathy for the weaker sex. Well, it's the opposite, starting with Socrates and Plato, male intellectuals are women's worst critics."

Q. How do you envisage the role of the family and the schools in training the new generations?

A. Families are facing the same problems we discussed, just like individuals. It's an identity crisis. The family unit does not know anymore whether children should behave according to strict traditional rules, or whether they should learn Western ways. As for our schools they battle over-crowding and their resources are stretched to the limit. Programmes are too long, too heavy and often they do not develop a child's natural talents. We may have a generation of children with no more creativity than pre-recorded videocassettes. Too many children grow up without realising that pursuing a formal education is their only chance to a rewarding life where they are at ease with themselves and the world. I have been told that some education officials are trying to address the problem, and the educational system may be thoroughly overhauled. Maybe this is our opening to a better future!"

— World News Link

A rare writer

By Domenica Russo

PARIS — Simone Schwarz-Bart is a rare writer. In 1973, she published a (Guadeloupean) family chronicle "Pluie et vent sur Tehueme miracle" (winner of the "Elle" readers' award). In 1979, she continued this literary saga with the history of the French West Indies hero "Ti Jean l'Horizon". In 1987, she wrote her first play "Ton beau capitaine", produced the same year at the Francophone Festival in Limoges.

Simone Schwarz-Bart's work traces the history of the Islands and of a community, in an ornate language through women's memories.

Simone Schwarz-Bart's work (published by Editions du Seuil) is above all highly coloured language. "What does it matter? The French language is much greater than France." In these words, Simone Schwarz-Bart evokes the way French people outside continental France write. The Creole language developed in the sunshines. It is descended from slavery and from 18th century-style French. It resonates with the "vitalistic impulse, music, laughter, orality and gesture, inherent in Black culture."

"Life, as it unfolds, has to be made interesting." The heroines in "Pluie et vent sur Tehueme miracle", and the tunes to "Ton beau capitaine" reveal the musical way of expression, real words between people.

The songs and nursery rhymes in "Pluie et vent sur Tehueme miracle", and the tunes to "Ton beau capitaine" reveal the musical way of expression, real words between people.

Simone Schwarz-Bart continues the work of Aime Cesaire. She pushes back the frontiers of language and gives it a rhythm and a tempo whose violence and profusion have no equal but the abundance of words explored.

For the author of the Guadeloupean saga, writing is "showing the soul and mankind. When my eyes go out, I don't want the people I have seen to die."

Simone Schwarz-Bart's work is also the memory of a land and a people. It is interspersed with the story of men and women who have to part. This separation is attested by the distant loving relationship between Wilnor, a Haitian agricultural worker, and Marie-Ange his wife.

— French features

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U.N. economists expect world trade to slacken

GENEVA (R) — World output and trade are likely to slow down this year and next after growing faster than expected in 1988, United Nations economists forecast Wednesday.

Measures by industrialised countries to curb inflation and greater caution amongst investors and consumers are checking demand, the U.N.'s 1989 World Economic Survey said.

Growth in the world economy is therefore expected to slacken from about 4.3 per cent in 1988 to 3.5 per cent in 1989, and to remain around that level in 1990, the survey said.

World trade increased by 8.3 per cent in 1988, faster than since the early 1970s, but was likely to slip to about six per cent in 1989, it added.

The survey, published for the summer session of the U.N. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) opening in Geneva Wednesday, attributed 1988 growth in output mainly to performances by the largest indus-

trialised and developing countries.

Developed market economies entered a record breaking seventh consecutive year of expansion, registering the highest growth rate since 1984.

The survey said the Soviet Union registered more rapid growth in 1988 than its East European communist partners. Economic reforms adopted to these countries had not yet increased total output as much as expected, and intervention by ministries continued to thwart efforts to introduce market discipline.

The debt crisis of developing countries continued unabated. They were still suffering from acute shortage of resources for essential imports and domestic investment, and this was causing social and economic problems, the survey said.

"The risk is that a sudden

change in expectations in international financial markets may put an even heavier burden on monetary policy to counteract destabilising price or exchange rate movements, which might make for an abrupt contraction," it noted.

"Such a scenario, with an adverse change in world trade and a rise in interest rates, would make adjustment efforts much more difficult," it added.

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IEA reports near peak world demand for oil

LONDON (R) — World oil demand is ending the 1980s almost back at the historic peak at which it began the decade, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said Wednesday.

Demand plunged from the 1979 record because of the price shocks administered in the seventies by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

But the latest monthly oil report by the IEA, the West's Paris-based energy watchdog, projected 1989 consumption outside the Communist Bloc as high as 52 million barrels per day (b/d).

That would be a gain of 1.2 million on 1988 and of about seven million — 15 per cent — from a 1983 low. It would be just "slightly below the peak in 1979," the IEA said.

High prices at that time stampeded consumers to turn down thermostats, develop new technology to use energy more efficiently and use more coal, gas and nuclear power.

The IEA noted Wednesday that oil consumption in the 24 industrial nations of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) this year would still be four million b/d down on 1979.

But higher Third World demand, particularly in Asia, has helped rescue OPEC, which is also trying to hold prices stable now to assist the recovery in demand.

OPEC output in the April-June

quarter of this year was put by the IEA at 21 million b/d. That was the group's highest for a second quarter since 1981, the year prices peaked at near \$40 per barrel compared with \$17-20 now.

The OPEC volume, however, is still almost one-third down from then which reflects more competition from non-OPEC sellers during this decade. It still has trouble trying to keep its 13 cash-pinned members within assigned output quotas.

Market analysts say the near-term direction of oil prices probably depends on the extent of excess production by two members, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, which refuse to bound by quotas they say are unfair.

Both have pledged some restraint on their excess to support a new OPEC output pact which took effect Saturday.

Kuwait, in particular, pledged a cut to 1.35 million b/d from a June total estimated by the IEA at 1.8 million including its share of a Neutral Zone divided with Saudi Arabia.

But oil traders are waiting to see what Kuwait will actually do and were not impressed by the latest IEA statistics. Spot prices were little changed around \$18.50 per barrel for North Sea Brent blend, a world benchmark.

In the long term the IEA saw the rise in oil demand easing.

It assumed that Western economies would expand by 2.75 per cent next year, after 3.25 per cent

in 1988.

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opposite Petra Bank

Tel. 681707.

Inspector questions U.S. aid operations in Egypt

WASHINGTON (AP) — Not a single family benefited during the first 10 years of a \$124-million U.S.-Egyptian programme to provide housing for low-income people near Cairo, according to the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

A new report to Congress by USAID Inspector General Herbert Beckington complains about U.S. aid operations in Egypt. At \$2.3 billion a year, Egypt gets more U.S. aid than any country except Israel.

The project began in 1978 at Helwan, about 29 kilometres south of Cairo, to cost \$160 million, shared equally by the two governments. By March 31, 1988, the United States had spent \$71 million and Egypt \$63 million and not one family had occupied an apartment, the report said.

John Riddle, a spokesman for the agency, said that since Beckington's report was written, 205 families have moved into 150 apartment units. The project had been planned to include 4,000 units.

"Aid had not verified the arrival in Egypt of more than \$223 million in mid-financed commodities through April 30, 1988," the report said, adding that the problem has persisted although it was mentioned in previous reports.

It also faulted USAID's accounting for more than \$11

million in Egyptian currency collected from sales of medical products.

The report, submitted to Congress every six months, covered Oct. 1, 1988, to March 31 of this year.

Beckington praised as well-managed the project to improve the power station at the Aswan High Dam, to which the agency is contributing \$140 million. The dam was built with Soviet help during the 1960s after the United States rejected the project.

The Egyptian government has not submitted required reports, Beckington said, so his agency cannot say if Egypt is contributing the equivalent of \$12 million as promised.

Decapite aid given by the United States and the Soviet Union, Egypt is in poor economic condition. Its citizens have an average income of about \$480 a year and one of the Third World's largest foreign debts, \$43 billion.

The government of President Hosni Mubarak is falling behind on its payments. Unless it makes a payment on the \$4.5 billion military debt to the United States by November, U.S. law requires that further aid be halted.

Manila wins \$3.5 b aid pledges

Officials attending the Tokyo meeting praised Mrs. Aquino's plans to reform the economy, and the increased aid was pledged on the basis of her programmes.

The programme's objectives are

to hold growth at about 6.5 per cent annually, hold inflation under 10 per cent and achieve an equitable distribution of the benefits of development, Villanueva said.

The World Bank, organiser of a three-day meeting of 20 countries and seven international organisations, announced the first-year figure. It carried forward through 1992 that level of foreign aid would provide a total of \$14 billion to the Philippines, a World Bank statement said.

"We are grateful for the positive and enthusiastic response of the international community to this unique effort to help us," said Roberto Villanueva, head of a foreign aid coordinating committee under Philippine President Corazon Aquino.

The aid programme shows "the large reservoir of good will that exists in the international community for the Aquino government," he said.

The Philippines now must show it can use the money effectively.

Villanueva said, "It is a challenge to our people and we must all rise to the occasion to promote our national interest," he said.

The World Bank declined to disclose details of the pledges from different countries and organisations.

On Tuesday, Japan said it would commit about \$1 billion, the European Community said its

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Wednesday, July 5, 1989
Central Bank official rates

Buy Sell French franc 86.3 87.2
U.S. dollar 559.4 565.4 Japanese yen (for 100) 399.2 403.2
Pound Sterling 895.3 904.3 Dutch guilder 360.0 363.6
Deutschmark 253.0 255.9 Swedish crown 85.9 86.8
Swiss franc 341.2 344.6 Indian rupee (for 100) 40.5 40.9
Belgian franc (for 10) 140.1 141.3

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One Sterling	1,595/575	U.S. dollars	Canadian dollar
One U.S. dollar	1,192/030	Deutschmarks	Dutch guilder
	1,911/525	Swiss francs	Swiss francs
	2,155/600	Belgian francs	French francs
	1,693/5405	French francs	Italian lire
	40,000/03	Swedish crowns	Japanese yen
	6,490/050	Danish crowns	Swedish crowns
	1384/1385	U.S. dollars	Canadian dollar
	140/1020	Deutschmarks	Dutch guilder
	6,512/575	Swiss francs	Swiss francs
	7,000/050	Belgian francs	French francs
	7,430/050	Italian lire	Swedish crowns
One ounce of gold	378.30/378.80	Danish crowns	U.S. dollars

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

By Reuters

SYDNEY — The Australian share market closed higher on bargain-hunting in blue chip stocks and strong trade in situation stocks. The All Ordinaries index closed 9.3 higher at 1,513.3.

TOKYO — Political and economic worries combined to weigh on the market, holding share prices within a narrow band to close broadly firmer in light trade. The Nikkei index firmed 119.33 to close at 33,309.71.

HONG KONG — Prices of blue chips rose to end at the day's high on increased demand from both local and overseas investors. The Hang Seng index rose 33.92 to 2,350.67.

SINGAPORE — Share prices closed marginally higher over a broad front after late selling and profit-taking early gains. The Straits Times Industrial index edged up 1.18 points to close at 1,305.01.

BOMBAY — Share prices rose after reports of good monsoon rains across the country.

FRANKFURT — Profit-taking pushed the DAX index down 9.92 points to 1,495.75 but dealers said recent rallies will probably resume next week. "The mood is still good," a trader said.

PARIS — With the market sliding listlessly into its summer slow-down the 50-share price indicator fell 0.57 per cent.

ZURICH — Foreign demand and lower Swiss money market rates supported share prices and the all-Swiss performance index closed eight points up at 1,115, a 1989 high.

LONDON — Transport stocks put a damper on trading. At 1516 GMT the FTSE index was down 11.5 points at 2,162.9.

NEW YORK — Trading was slow amid worries that the economy was heading into a recession. At 1636 GMT the Dow Jones index was 7.59 lower at

SPORTS IN BRIEF

JADOR TIE MARADONNA DOWN: Ecuador's national team stunned heavily-favored Argentina with a 0-0 tie in ana, Brazil Tuesday and Uruguay blanked Bolivia 3-0 in round matches of the America Cup tournament, a key test upcoming World Cup qualifying matches. (AP)

WLD FENCING TITLE BEGINS: The biggest Worlding Championships ever held, featuring more than 500 fencers from 40 countries, begins in Denver Wednesday first time the championships have been held in the United States since 1958 and only the second time ever. By the time the upships end, in 11 days, titles will be awarded in 10 categories — individual and team competition in men's foil, epee, sabre and women's foil and epee. This is the first world event which women have been allowed to compete in epee, an event usually thought too dangerous. (AP)

POLI REPLACE BIANCHI WITH UNKNOWN: Italian FA cup winners Napoli announced Tuesday they were acting embattled soccer manager Ottavio Bianchi with relative unknown Alberto Bigon from first division Cesena. Napoli's announcement ended months of speculation and controversy over Bianchi, stemming mostly from poor relations with some fans, particularly Argentine captain Diego Maradona. Cesena ended 13th in the first division this season. Napoli were runners-up in the league and beaten finalists in the domestic cup.

CKAY BACK FROM JAIL WITH A WINNER: Jockey Mackay, released on bail from prison last week, rode 14-1 neck to a short head victory at Folkestone horse races yesterday. Mackay, who is accused of drug smuggling offences, spent three months in custody awaiting trial. But he returned to saddle Saturday when his father-in-law, Newmarket trainer Eldin, agreed to stand bail. (R)

NSA FAILS OAKS DOPE TEST: Epsom Oaks classic winner Alyss faces disqualification after failing a post-race dope test. The jockey club, governing body of horse racing in Britain, Tuesday it had begun a probe on how a prohibited substance, identified later as camphor, came to be given to the filly. If qualified, Alyss, owned by the Aga Khan, would be the first to lose an English classic in this way. Alyss's trainer, Michael Stoute said: "A derivative of camphor was found in Alyss's urine sample." But he refused to elaborate on what the substance came to be there. (R)

YMPIC FINALIST OUT OF SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIPS: Stephanie Ortwig, West German Olympic swimming finalist, has been forced to pull out of next month's European Championships because of a virus. The double European Junior Champion and Seoul Olympic finalist over 200 and 400 metres freestyle, Ortwig has been told by her doctor to stop training for four weeks, the West German Swimming Association said Wednesday. The 16-year-old swimmer had been strongly set to win medals at the championships in Bonn from August 20.



Paddling furiously: the Spaniard Pedro Delgado, this year's defending champion in the Tour De France, spent all last week trying to recover after being caught standing in the heats, when he stopped to sign autographs for fans. Although he had made some progress, by the end of the first stage he was still languishing near the end of the standings.

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, JULY 6, 1989

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

by Thomas Pearson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Institute

GENERAL TENDENCIES:

Many will rise early, work energetically, and make extraordinary gains. The later day leads to mental pursuits and family harmony. The late, late crowd could face unexpected surprises.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) Pleasant stellar aspects can restore a feeling of harmony. Good companionship is welcomed — a perfect time for ardent affection.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) Self-assurance grows through the day. It is time to reorganize and investigate new work schedules that are efficient.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) You may be very active with business matters that demand your immediate attention. Harmony and goodwill influence this fine day.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to Jul. 21) Action will accomplish more than words. The ground work has been laid, but you must bring your plan to life.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Accomplishment of goals comes through steady application. Improved financial foresight makes you a winner.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) You can benefit through further study. Use your communicative skills. Be systematic. Your family supports you 100 percent.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) Keep documentation up-to-date. You may be called on to produce records in the near future. The junk drawer may hold a surprise.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) Romantic preoccupation can allow an attractive financial offer to pass you. Set aside cash for the future. Don't mix business with pleasure.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) Focus on partnerships, family mat-

ers, and enjoyment with siblings. To feel better, place more emphasis on physical fitness.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Stellar influences put you in the limelight, and that is where you shine best. Elements of luck and timing are at your disposal.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Helpful influential pals who control your financial future with diplomacy. Analyze the situation before acting. Control indulgences.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) A new relationship grows cold. Plans are revised or are temporarily resolved. Show the self-reliant side of your nature.

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Chinese conundrum... eyes closed to a worrying future

Peking by night — deserted city of shuffling troops

By Terrell Jones
The Associated Press

PEKING — The handful of troops guarding street intersections in Peking by day are lost in the crowds, but at night when the Chinese capital empties, the city becomes the domain of shadows and soldiers.

There is no curfew under Peking martial law, but with sunset the streets clear and the troops come out. Sometimes they form long lines along main boulevards. Elsewhere they cluster at crossings and on bridges.

Shuffling almost silently along dimly lit streets in groups of eight to 12, they are invisible until one virtually gets close enough to touch them.

Infantrymen shouldering AK-47 rifles loiter quietly at intersections, stopping cars after 10 p.m. for identification checks and often thorough searches.

"We're here to stop hooliganism at night," said one soldier barely into his 20s when asked by an American reporter what the checks were for.

"There's no problem, you may go," he said, shooting the reporter off.

There have been reports of guerrillas-like attacks on troops occupying Peking in recent

days. A soldier from the 63rd army was killed by a sniper in western Peking last weekend, according to Chinese sources. Western news reports said the bodies of two soldiers were found this week in a Peking canal after they had been strangled.

The government has also charged that martial law troops have been fired on by snipers.

Ordinary Chinese have no access to guns, so the snipers, if true, could be angered citizens who made off with army weapons during the military's chaotic onslaught June 3-4 against pro-democracy demonstrators in Peking.

The footsoldiers are generally polite, telling foreigners whose ID they check "sorry" or "thank you" — sometimes in English.

Asked to which unit he belonged, one allowed that he was from the 47th army, which records show is based in rural Zian province. Then a fellow enlisted man interrupted quickly and said such information was "secret."

Officers, generally wearing automatic pistols on their belts, issue orders impatiently.

"Open the trunk, open everything," one officer snapped as he searched an American reporter's car one night.

'Doomsday solution' looms for Ireland

DUBLIN (R) — Caretaker Prime Minister Charles Haughey's aversion to coalition may now force Ireland into a general election no one wants.

The Progressive Democrats, the small centre-right party Haughey is courting in a bid to win an overall majority, told him Wednesday that further talks were pointless unless he backed down on power-sharing.

Haughey, who made the biggest blunder of his political career in calling a snap election last month that left him worse off than before, was forced to resign last week when he failed to be reelected as prime minister for the fourth time.

Parliament returns Thursday with deputies facing what



Charles Haughey

norm. Britain, Spain and Portugal are seen as exceptions with their one-party governments.

But Fianna Fail, which has governed Ireland for 40 of the last 50 years, solidly backs Haughey's refusal to contemplate coalition.

"When the options are to split the party or to go for a general election, the choice is simple," one minister commented.

Britain's Muslims collide with government over blasphemy laws

LONDON (Agencies) — The British government Tuesday refused to extend blasphemy laws for Muslims who want to bring author Salman Rushdie to trial for blaspheming Islam.

Home Office Minister John Patten told leading British Muslims in a letter that extending the laws could damage relations between different religious groups.

Muslim leaders rejected the government's stance and vowed to continue their campaign to bring Rushdie to court.

"It shows to me clearly that they are prepared to use the law to defend Salman Rushdie and his publishers," said Dr. Kalim Siddiqui, director of the Muslim Institute.

Patten urged the one million Muslims and other ethnic groups to participate more fully in British society, saying there is no room for separation or segregation.

Muslims and others want the blasphemy law extended to reflect Britain's multi-cultural society. The law, which has been used in courts only twice in the past 67 years, covers only Christianity, specifically the state Church of England.

"The difficulties in redefining what should or should not be blasphemous would be immense," Patten wrote.

"Should protection be extended to all faiths, including the very minor or very obscure? Should it extend only to faiths believing in one God? Or to major or mainstream faiths only? I believe there is no equitable, just or right answer to these questions."

Patten said the government also feared a rush of litigation which would damage relations between faiths."

Patten acknowledged the continuing controversy over "The

Satanic Verses," and said the government "understands how much hurt and anxiety that book has caused, and ... that insults, particularly to a deeply held faith, are not easily forgotten or forgiven."

Rushdie, who was born into a Muslim family in India, has been in hiding since Feb. 14 when the late Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini ordered him to be killed for blaspheming Islam.

Khomeini died June 3, but the death sentence remains.

Siddiqui said Muslim leaders will never consider a response to Patten's letter.

Liaquat Hussain, general secretary of the Council of Mosques in Bradford, where some of the largest demonstrations against Rushdie have taken place said: "we will continue to protest and carry on our campaign within the framework of the law."

Soviets to pay damages for ghost MiG crash in Belgium

BRUSSELS (R) — The Soviet Union agreed Wednesday to pay full compensation after a pilotless MiG-23 fighter crashed in southwestern Belgium, killing one man, Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens said.

He told a news conference the Soviet ambassador to Brussels had offered his country's deep regret for Tuesday's incident in which the single-engined fighter flattened the house of the 19-year-old victim's parents.

"Mr. (Felix) Bogdanov told me the Soviet Union would pay all material and even moral damages," Eyskens said after meeting the Soviet ambassador.

The Soviet fighter flew across West Germany and the Netherlands before crashing into a Belgian border village. The pilot ejected in Poland after encountering technical problems.

Soviet Defense Minister Dmitry Yazov said East bloc forces did not detect the aircraft and called for an investigation.

"It is difficult to explain why it was not shot down, why it was not detected," Yazov told TASS news agency in Moscow. "A large-scale investigation should be carried out."

Eyskens said he had agreed to a request made by Bogdanov that Soviet authorities be allowed to recover the plane.

He said he had protested against the MiG's incursion into Belgian air space.

He had also remained on Soviet authorities' failure to give warning that the fighter was heading into Western air space and on what he called Moscow's "extreme slowness" in publishing an official communiqué on the incident through TASS.

"He (Bogdanov) said he had no answer, no explanation," Eyskens said.

The minister said the incident



Firemen and rescue workers extinguish fire on the smouldering debris of the MiG-23 that crashed into a house near Courtrai, Belgium Tuesday

showed that the system of exchanging information between the Warsaw Pact and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) had to be improved.

Belgian Defense Minister Guy Coeme said the two alliances should set up a permanently-manned joint crisis centre to warn each other about such incidents.

"In future we have to be better informed about objects coming from the East," he told Belgian radio. "It could happen to either side — think of a Western plane or missile entering East bloc air space."

Coeme will make the proposal to NATO as soon as possible and it will also be brought up in November at the next meeting of the seven-nation Western Euro-

npean Union defence grouping, a Defence Ministry spokesman said.

Yazov said the plane lost power during take-off from Kolobrzeg, near the Polish-East German border.

It was picked up by NATO radar entering Western air space and two U.S. F-15s shadowed it through most of its 1,000-kilometer ghost flight.

Western alliance and Belgian government officials said the two interceptors did not shoot down the MiG because there was no danger of its crashing on an urban area, although it passed near the cities of Eindhoven and Antwerp.

They said they were satisfied that the aircraft, which carried no nuclear missiles or bombs, was not on an attacking mission and they hoped it would eventually come down in the English Channel.

Coeme said the pilots considered that shooting it down would be more dangerous than letting it run out of fuel and crash.

"There was a very good chance the plane would crash into the countryside rather than a house and it was a terrible fluke that one person is dead today," he said.

He said the pilots were finally ordered to shoot down the plane when they realized it might hit the French border town of Lille, but it crashed before they could fire.

"There was a problem in April, but printing had already begun and we had no way of identifying those affected," Brennan said. "The mistake occurred when information was transferred from an old data base. The publication of the phone numbers can be easily rectified by simply giving subscribers a new number, but unfortunately the release of addresses is a problem," he said.

Getting hitched

— on the street

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Nanci Stark was born on Grizella Street and has lived there for all of her 31 years, so when she decided to marry Phil Gavasto there was only one place to hold the wedding: on Grizella Street. As about 125 friends and neighbors looked on, the father of the bride, John A. Stark, escorted Nanci down a neighbour's driveway into the cul-de-sac, where she stood next to the groom. The lawn was decorated with nine pink flamingos, one dressed as a bride and another as a groom.

Grizella was foreign minister for 28 years after serving as ambassador to the United States during World War II, then to the U.N. Security Council and Britain in a half-century of public service.

He was a fixture in world diplomacy for decades, helping forge the alliance that defeated Nazi Germany and the Axis in World War II, joining in founding the United Nations and participating in superpower talks that shaped the modern world.

But when Mikhail Gorbachev took over as Soviet leader in

March 1985, he eased Gromyko of power and steered Kremlin foreign policy towards a new, nonconfrontational approach.

Some Soviets have said that Gromyko shared the blame for foreign policy mistakes, such as the 1979 Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, and the confrontational approach he represented was reflected in another nickname, "Mr. Nyet."

He was retired as foreign minister in 1985 and named to the largely ceremonial position of president. Last fall, Gorbachev became president and in April, Gromyko lost his last official post, as a member of the Communist Party Central Committee. He died as a private retiree.

Those attending the funeral echoed the reserved respect for Gromyko expressed by the Soviet leadership.

"He represented old times," said navy officer Andrei N. Pochtarov as he waited on a sidewalk to see the body. "Now we must have a new approach. Times have changed."

— on Grizella Street.

Nostalgia for \$9m

WHITE CASTLE (AP) — It is the old south in wood and white paint, and it is available for \$9 million. Nottoway plantation's 64 rooms, 200 windows and 22 white cypress columns are for sale. "A rare opportunity to purchase a part of American history," an advertisement says. The three-story landmark near the Mississippi was completed in 1859.

Owner Paul Ramsay, an Australian health-care Mogul, has asked a Dallas realty company to offer the home for sale. He and a partner bought it in 1985 for \$4.5 million. John Lewis of Hoffman realty said an advertisement for Nottoway first appeared in the New York Times a week ago. By the end of the week, he said, six people, all from the New York area, had inquired about buying Nottoway. Nottoway first opened its doors to the public in 1980.

The former officers were stripped of the rank and expelled from the Communist Party after their arrest in June.

Death penalty sought for Cuban officers

MEXICO CITY (AP) — The prosecutor in the court-martial of 15 former Cuban military officers accused of drug trafficking asked for the death penalty for former General Arnaldo Ochoa and six others, the Cuban government news agency said Wednesday.

Brigadier General Juan Escalona sought 30-year prison sentences for two other former officers, 25-year sentences for four of them and 15-year terms for the final two defendants, Prensa Latina said in a dispatch from Havana, monitored in Mexico City.

Cuba's former interior minister also is accused in the case, but was not mentioned in the sentencing request.

The former officers were stripped of the rank and expelled from the Communist Party after their arrest in June.

Mexican ruling party admits defeat

MEXICO CITY (R) — Mexico's ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) has admitted defeat in Sunday's elections in Baja California Norte, the first time a state government will have been won by the opposition in 60 years.

If the result is confirmed by the federal electoral commission next Sunday, the new governor will be the candidate of the centre-right National Action Party (PAN), Ernesto Ruffo Appel.

Ruling party President Luis Donaldo Colosio acknowledged defeat late Tuesday at a news conference during which he said his party was ahead in early returns in four other states where elections were held.

"We must recognise that the tendency in the returns from Baja California Norte favours the candidate of the PAN," Colosio said.

"Democratisation has been the symbol around which we have proposed the reorganisation of our party," Colosio said.

Salinas' 50 per cent winning

vote in last year's elections was the narrowest margin in the party's uninterrupted 60 year hold on power. He has since promised political reforms to promote democracy among an electorate that has become apathetic about voting.

— said.

The ruling party's candidate in the state, Margarita Ortega Villa, also recognised the count was running in favour of Ruffo Appel.

Colosio said recognition of the defeat marks a new stage in Mexican democracy, and the fulfilment of a promise by President Carlos Salinas de Gortari to recognise opposition triumphs.

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Global weather (major world cities)

MIN. MAX. °C °F °C °F Weather

AMSTERDAM... 13 55 27 81 Clear

ATHENS... 21 70 34 93 Clear

BANGKOK... 30 88 40 104 Cloudy

BRAZILIA... 27 51 32 90 Cloudy

CARIO... 28 85 36 100 Clear

CHICAGO... 22 72 38 100 Clear

COPENHAGEN... 12 54 28 85 Clear

FRANKFURT... 18 68 24 78 Clear

GENEVA... 15 59 23 79 Clear

HONG KONG... 26 82 32 91 Clear

ISRAEL... 26 77 28 85 Clear

LONDON... 13 57 27 81 Clear

LOS ANGELES... 10 52 28 82 Clear

MADRID... 20 88 34 97 Clear

MECCA... 29 84 44 111 Clear

MONTRÉAL... 15 6